



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 July 2024

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30th July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/24/3341706
106 Beechcroft Road, London SW17 7DA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant of planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Richard & Lisa Twomey against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Reference is 2024/0119.
 - The development proposed is alterations, including erection of rear extension above the two-storey back addition and removal of chimney stack to the rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for alterations, including the erection of rear extension above the two-storey back addition and removal of the chimney stack to the rear at 106 Beechcroft Road, London SW17 7DA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. 2024/0119, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this Decision;
 - 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building;
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: OS based Location Plan & Drawing Nos. 1-10 inclusive;
 - 4) Prior to occupation of the development the window in the side elevation at second floor shall be obscure glazed and non-opening (unless the parts of the window which can be opened are more than 1.7 metres above floor level) and thereafter retained in that form.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are (i) the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and its surroundings, and (ii) the effect on the living conditions for adjoining occupiers as regards outlook and light.

Reasons

3. On the first issue, the Council considers that the appeal scheme would be an overly large, bulky and unsympathetic addition to the rear roofscape that would fail to integrate positively with the existing building or its surroundings. I agree that with a length almost equivalent to that of the existing back addition and

- with only a minimal set in from the eaves the proposal would be of a scale that would not be in accordance with the guidance in the Council's Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2016.
4. However, the area from which the extension would be seen is the rear gardens of the houses in the terraces of Beechcroft Road and to the north east Mandrake Road. I saw on my visit that in this area there is already a preponderance of flat roofed rear extensions, including large additions at second floor level above the original back additions, with a case in point being the adjoining property at No. 104. Indeed, I note that the Officer's Report acknowledges that '*similarly proportioned roof extensions are visible from the rear of the host site*'.
 5. However, whilst the report argues that none of these were the subject of a planning permission, the grounds of appeal refer to an example of this at nearby No. 75 Mandrake Road. More importantly in my view is that with the large amount of roof extensions already built, the character and appearance of this rearward setting between Beechcroft and Mandrake Roads is already one where the appeal proposal would not be perceived as being out of keeping or in any way incongruous.
 6. Furthermore as a matter of practicality, from the available viewpoints it would be difficult to notice the proposed difference in length from the existing addition or other nearby extensions in both roads, nor to reasonably conclude that such a difference amounted to material harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling or the area. In this regard a comparison between application drawing Nos. 4 and 9 is helpful, whilst at the same time taking into account the presence of the extension at the adjoining No. 104.
 7. As regards issue (ii), the outlook from and light to a first floor bedroom window on the rear elevation of No. 104 would be affected by the proposal. However, the immediate outlook from this window is already one of its own roof extension and the existing addition at the appeal property. This already precludes peripheral views and thereby limits the field of vision directly towards the rear garden and in longer views the opposite dwelling in the Mandrake Road terrace.
 8. I agree that the Council's objective of an extension length restricted to 50% of the appeal dwelling's outrigger would reduce the impact on the aspect from this window, but in my view not significantly more than already exists. As regards light, the fact that the window faces north east and that the window is to a bedroom (as opposed to a living room) combine to significantly limit the potential for a noticeably adverse effect.
 9. Overall, in respect of both main issues I agree that there is some conflict with the Council's policies and guidance (Wandsworth Local Plan 2023 Policies LP1 & LP5 on issue (i) and LP2 on issue (ii) and in both cases the Housing SPD). However, I am not persuaded that any harm caused would be such as to withhold permission.
 10. In making this judgement I have had regard to the difficulties in extending and improving residential accommodation in areas of relatively high density Housing without having at least some disadvantages. And on issue (ii) I also give significant weight to the absence of an objection to the appeal scheme from the occupiers of No. 104.

11. I shall therefore allow the appeal subject to the conditions suggested by the Council. A condition requiring matching external materials is needed to ensure the building has a harmonious appearance. A condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans is required for the avoidance of doubt and is in the interests of proper planning. A restriction in the outlook from a window will safeguard the privacy of the occupiers of No. 104.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR